

QUAKERS

Principles Quaking:

OR,

Pretended Light proved Darknefs, and
Perfections found to be greatest
Imperfections.

In an Answer to a written Paper, subscribed with
the Name of THOMAS HOLME, and scattered
through the Country about *Liverpool*
in *Lancashire*.

Modestly Propounded by *Ralph Hall*, an affectio-
nate Lover of Truth, Admirer of sincere saving
Light, ardent desirer of perfection.

Isa. 5. 20.

*Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil, that put darkness for
light, and light for darkness, that put bitter for sweet, and sweet
for bitter.*

Jude 10.

These speak evil of what they do not know.

LONDON:

Printed by R. I. and are to be sold by *Edm. Paxton*, near *Doctors Com-
mons*, and *Tho. Parkhurst*, over against the great Conduit
in *Cheapside*. 1656.



Unto the Christian Reader, especially the Inhabitants about Liverpool, and Walton in Lancashire.

Courteous Reader :



*I*f thou hast been in any measure sensible of the World, age, and time of the Church, in which we have our being, and seriously observant of the Dispensations of Providence suitable to the season, thou canst not but have seen Gods severity, and Satans subtilty as much acted as in any Age of the World; Gods severity in permitting, and silently indulging; Satans subtilty, in seducing the simple, and such as embrace not the truth in the love of it, 2 Thes. 2. 10. and subjecting the Church to exceeding great disorder and confusion, and that under the specious pretences of Light, Reformation, and Liberty; Gods severity in setting aside the Authority both in Church and State, which should have been as an hook in the nostrils, and bridle to the tongue of evil instruments; Deceivers, going about to deceive, and compassing all places to decry the Truth and Ordinances of God; Gods severity in with-drawing his discerning and establishing Spirit, and giving men up to the vanity of their mindes, to strong delusions, nay and to a reprobate sense, not to distinguish between good and evil, false and true, but to be carried Captive at the pleasure of the Prince of Darkness, and to determine this sad estate, an estate of glorious and Saint-like liberty; yet in all this Gods severity hath not so much appeared as in the late upstart Quakers, by whom the Devil comes in stealingly into the Field, setting aside his usual subtilties in down and direct terms, to damn all Sacred Order and Ordinances of God, under no pretence taking with a rational man, much less an understanding Christian, whilst the bare wordie out-cry of a light within you (without any the least discovery of its form, matter or property, nay with the concomitancy of the most palpable acts and effects of positive darkness that can be imagined) is the chief and only way, the sum and all of the arguments urged to call from the Church, truth, and Ordinances of the Gospel, unto a meer

Phren-

The Epistle to the Reader

Phrensic, and fanatick spirit of rayling and reproach, yet now to us, how do they prevail too too much with too too many?

Concerning these unhappy Quakers many things have been written, not so much in order to their conviction, who neither own, nor acknowledge any common or certain rule, nor yet with any meekness and silent submission yeeld their ears to instruction, nor yet are sound in mind, but have subdued that very rationall power with which God and Nature hath indued some, unto that sad and delusive power with which they are possessed, insomuch that we may say of them, as one in another case, Hoc genus hominum ridere soleo non odisse, they are to be pittied, not hated; they are to be prayed for, not preached unto; for the Devil which possesseth them, is such as can be cast out by no other means save fasting and prayer; and indeed amongst other grounds of our compassion, this is not the least, that they enjoy too much liberty, to express and increase their madness, that though their spirits are subject to a Bedlam temper and disposition, men will not shew them so much pity as to subject them to Bedlam Discipline.

But these things were written for the prevention of others, who by Gods grace are yet sound, not only in the faith, but minde, that they may be defended against the force of so simple a delusion, which must needs prevail more by enchantments then enlightening arguments, the which they do not at all urge, and therefore pretend to be ruled by a light within them, and appeal to no other Judge save the light within them, and so by an obscure kinde of Chymistry resolve all into light, which is no other than the very word light, without any formal being, or properties peculiar to real light. For to expostulate with thee (Courteous Reader) concerning this their so much cried up light within them, consider, is it light proper, or Metaphorical? Is it in it self by way of substance a body of material light, or something that in its operation doth so much resemble light, that it is so denominated? if the former, the Sun and Moon, those material substantial lights of Heaven are of no use to them, and much charge expended in Candle-light will be by them spared; nay and their very being and motion must be conviction and direction to all such as live but under their Horizon: but if the latter, viz. Metaphorical light, for their convincing, directing Principles and power, then is their light, the light of Nature, or grace? if the light of Nature, what have they above others, how can they cry up perfection? have they any thing that is not common to men as men? (viz. some sparklings of light which escaped the sad blast of mans fearful fall) the which dictateth several directions to duty to men, and some towards God, discovereth some things

The Epistle to the Reader.

things as false, and evil, other things as true, and good to be embraced, and pursued; if this be the light they call men to follow and obey, what have they that Turks, Jews, and Pagans do not enjoy? Why should they boast of perfection? is not this light too weak to discover and comprehend the deep things of God, and mysteries of Salvation? yet by the principles of this light they preach to others, the purest whereof is, Do as you would be done by, owe no man any thing, repent, and the like morall precepts; as also by their practice whereon they ground their imagined perfection, proudly challenging men to charge them with dishonesty or disorder in the use of the Creature (from which they superstitiously abstain) This seems to any rational man to be the light they do so much advance, and pretend unto.

If this be the light they cry up, I say it is a light though a weak one, it will distinguish objects, and dictate Duties, though darkly; and I heartily wish that pretenders to higher light would more observe this than they do; sure I am, the justice of Aristides and Fabricius may reprove the injustice and dishonesty of many Christians, enjoying this light, enlarged and made more bright by the light of the Gospel, and if but according to the principles of this light they would reduce men to Morall virtues, let them rightly display the beams thereof, and I shall desire they may meet with many Proselytes, but whilst they publish this light to others, I cannot but observe they darken it themselves, they darken it by their disorderly expressions, declaring things in general terms, not defining the nature of them; doth not the incongruity of their expression, the inconsistency of their Sentences, each one other multiplying words in an undigested, immethodical heap, leave all men in the dark, what they mean by their light, whilst they are to them that hear plain barbarians, A vox & præterea nihil, and doth not Nature teach to speak in order, and method, Principles in which to be instructed doth it not count him the most elegant Orator who speaks so distinctly and plainly, that the beams of light from him may be seen and acknowledged by all? did not Nature call Heraclitus *συνεῖνος* the dark Philosopher, for rendering *Obscura per obscuriora*, losing a Principle in a cloud of obscure insignificant words? nay and doth not their practice (which should be the clear comment on their Principles) render them much more dark, or rather distastfull as acts of darkness, so detected by the very light of Nature; what will you say to their altogether decrying Gods outward worship? doth not Nature it self direct to some acts of worship, to an acknowledged Deity? only their light renounceth it. Is it Light that leads to the disrespect of all superiours, neither to give them honour in words or gesture? was not
the

The Epistle to the Reader.

the Fifth Command ingraven on the heart by Nature? Teacheth it not all men in the World to observe that order which God hath set among men, and give to every man that civil honour that is due unto them, by reason of age, place, or quality? The light of Nature blusheth at their rude Language and behaviour, and bespeaks them beasts of darkness, rather than Subjects of any distinguishing light; Doth the light of Nature give liberty for women to be common controulers, and ordinary speakers? Is not silence the duty imposed, and Property adorning that Sex? will not the Heathen reject the Religion which is enforced with feminine voyce and stile? finde you them not without natural affection to their Husbands, and Children? not only in a neglect of their time and callings in idleness, following the pretended light within them, but also wickedly leaving them, and wandring from Country to Country, from Nation to Nation, in a rabid and savage way, to advance the pretended light within them? these and the like acts of most gross and palpable darkness are so obvious to every observant eye, that they seeing them cannot but blush if Natures weak and vitiated eye be but half open, and I cannot think that there needed any more pregnant or perswasive argument to stay thee from closing with their delusions, than a plain Historical representation of their works of darkness, so directly contrary to the light of Nature.

But their light pretends it self to be that of Grace, and if so, how was it acquired. how is it approved? They have indeed by Providence been cast into Gospel-times, and places, and so know the Scripture, and its phrases, but by it they gained not this Light; for the Scripture, they disown and decry, they must needs then have it by some extraordinary infusion, and this certainly is not from the spirit of Truth and Light; for besides that it enlightens us, in and by the Scriptures it brings into the soul a Light that doth clearly discover the object, and irradiate the Organ, a Light that doth dispel all disorder and confusion, distinguishing things that differ, defining things that exist, declaring duties, and detecting sins, with a conviction irresistible; it is to be feared, nay positively affirmed, that this Light, so full of confusion, darkness, and disorder, is no other than the enlightnings of the Prince of Darkness, darting out Scripture words without either sense or reason, and suited to the seducement of a people to whom by providence Scripture-language is grown natural, that no delusion will down with them that savours not of it.

This will appear more certain, if you consider how this Light is approved, and here consider what are the properties of it, what object

doth

The Epistle to the Reader.

doth it discover? what duty doth it direct? what real evil doth it detect and convince of? as to the former, it doth not so much as pretend to them, by either propounding any object, or prescribing any duty more than the Light, without description, and heeding it without any rules of direction; so that it gives you no center, or ground to hope, no counsel to the soul, nay so farre is this Light from directing unto, that it diverts the soul from every duty, the subjects of it, sanctifie no Sabbaths, seek not God at any time in prayer, crave not so much as a blessing on their meat and drink; but in a word, throw off every act of religion as a work of darkness; the only property of Light to which it doth pretend is that of reprovng and convincing of evil, and if the matter reprov'd, and manner of reprovng bespeak it not to be positive darkness, let the sons of Light judge.

1 As to the matter reprov'd, Is it not generally the very Worship of God, and duties of Christianity, that the which every rational enlightened Christian must needs see to be prescribed by Jesus Christ, and declared in the Scriptures? Is it not the Sabbaths, solemn assemblies of God and his people? Is it not Prayer, Reading, Hearing, receiving the Sacraments, &c. even all the practices of Piety they decry, insomuch that we cannot but see them obnoxious to that sad woe denounced against such as call good evil, evil good; light darkness, darkness light; in a word, they decry those things that Satan durst not have spoken against, had he not prepared the spirits of men by a spirit of Scepticism, having brought them to such an equipoiz, that a very calling light darkness, and darkness light may cast the scales, so that indeed we have cause to say of their reproofs, as Augustine in another case, Nos non curamus de eis qui reprehendunt quæ non comprehendunt, We regard not their reproofs, for they blame what they do not understand, and are justly to be branded with the Apostles note of Seducers, They speak evil of things they do not know, Jude 10.

2 As the matter of their reproof, so the manner in which they manage it, manifesteth it to be darkness, enmity at light, for they condemn as Judge without any convincing Arguments, or Demonstrations; thoulyest being their form of reproof, and only forcible reason of conviction; they are confus'd, blaming every thing, but convincing of no one; the whole fabrick of Religion is the cloud of darkness they strike at, they distinguish nothing as denoted guilty, and to be demolished. They cursedly rail, rather than convincingly reprove, for it may be said of them as Munster notes of the monstrous men in India, Non loquuntur sed latrant, they do not speak but bark; by positive Assertions, reproachful Epithites,
rayling

The Epistle to the Reader.

rayling Speeches, conquering the modest and civil, and indeed by their black mouthes become like the Basilisk, killing the Birds of the Air in their very flight, by their very breath; for if once reason begin to trauerse their black Indictments, thou art Carnal, Antichristian, Devils, and the like, must stay the Proceſs, and confirm the sentence.

Many ways I might manifest the darkness of their pretended light, but I must not now stand on an History of them, but leave them to the view of their carriage, the witness of such who have been seduced by them, and the writings of such as have withstood them, amongst which I here commend to thee this small Tract, written in a plain, simple, and rustick stile, like unto its Author, a plain simple country-man, in a private Calling, possessing an honest heart, and publick spirit, filled with zeal to plead the Cause of Truth to his power, and to prevent his Country-men and Neighbours from being seduced by this Fanatick Generation, and following a plain Ignis fatuus into a wilde Wilderness of pretended light within; only before I part with thee, give me leave to prescribe to thee these few Rules for thy preservation.

1 Set Reason in its Throne, I mean not reasons Dictates, which yet as thou art a man thou must observe and follow, though they are too short to guide thee to Heaven; but the rational faculty and power of discerning, discoursing, and determining things which God and Nature hath given thee; for observe, the Devil blindes this Eye, and de-thrones this Judge, when he advanceth this pretended light: when you are mad you may be brought to any thing.

2 Stick close to Scripture, as the Light unto thy feet, and Lanthorne to thy paths, by this the light exhibited by Christ and his Apostles was manifested, and by this the Spirit of Light will be judged; whilst Reason doth sit Judge, see that it sentence by the Law of Scripture; therefore in the right use of Scripture see that thou do own and embrace,

First, Scripture sentences, not words, this sort of men do speak words, and but words, leaving sentences, and so making the Word of God of none effect.

Secondly, Sense of Scripture, not meerly sentence, the sentence may be figurative, and to be understood otherwise than the words do simply shew, as, This is my Body, and other like expressions do evidence.

Thirdly, Sense rationally inferred, as well as positively asserted, reasoning from the Scripture is suitable to an enlightned rational being.

Fourthly, Sense plainly flowing from the scope and circumstances of the text, not strained by allusion unto Allegories, and the like.

The Epistle to the Reader.

3 State to the Soul standing Principles of Christianity, see some things to be true, and out of all controversie not to be admitted to debate, but retained with all resolution against all temptation, know that a Sceptick is a Quakers Gentleman-usher.

4 Shunn their Society; especially solemn Assemblies; how shouldest thou abuse but learn a lesson in the Devils School if thither thou resort day by day? if their air bee infectious, and Inchantments only Spiritual, (which on good ground, and I beleave experience too, are found to bee natural,) canst thou accompany with them without danger? it was once the Churches cry, Cant. 1. 7. Why should I turn aside by the flocks of thy companions?

5 Sue by fervent prayer for the spirit of a sound mind; now that thou art faln into a fanatique age, prize the many helps thou hast to keep thee in thy wits, and know that spirit of sobriety is the blessing of God, but thereby effected, in special use this Tract unto its especial end, and that thou by it, and helps of the like nature may be delivered from the error of the wicked, is and shall be the constant prayer of

April 17.
1656.

Thine, in and for the truth of the
Gospel:

Zach. Crofton.



THE QUAKERS

Paper truly copied out, as it was by
them written, and sent to the Ministers and
People, in, and about *Walton*, and
Liverpool:

To which the following Treatise is an
Answer.

To the Priests and people of *Walton* and
Liverpool, and thereabouts.



Or as much as there was a Dispute, at the Greave-
house near *Walton*, betwixt the people called
Quakers, and the aforesaid Priests before men-
tioned: In which Dispute the Priests was to
prove the lawfulness of receiving of Tythes
which by Scripture they could not do, but one
Scripture they brought in for their own ends,
which makes nothing for their purpose, in *Luke*
11.42. to prove the receiving of Tythes, for this was before he was
sacrificed up, when he said, Woe unto ye Pharisees, for ye tythe Mint and
B Rue

Rue, and all manner of Herbs, and pass over judgement, and the love of God; These ought yee to have done, and not to leave the other undone.

Now let all people who have any understanding consider and see, whether this be any ground or command for the Priests to take Tythes of the people after his being sacrificed up, for he said, These ought ye to have done, but he gave no commandment to continue in them, for he was the end of the Priesthood, and the end of the Law, by which the Priests took Tythes, for the Priesthood being changed, there was of necessity a change of the Law, and a disanulling of the Commandement going before, as Heb. 7. 12. 18. But in the time of the Law they was to take Tythes of the people according to the Law, Heb. 7. 5. and those that did not bring their Tythes into the Store-house whilst that Law and Commandement was of force, robbed God, Mal. 3. 8. 10. And the Lord commanded that all the Tythes should be brought of the increase, and laid up, and the Levite, because he had no part nor inheritance with the people, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widows should come and eat, and be satisfied, Deut. 14. 28, 29. And this was in the first Priesthood, and before Jesus Christ was sacrificed up, the unchangeable Priesthood, Heb. 8. 1. The everlasting Treasure, Col. 2. 3. In whom dwells all fulness, vers. 9. Who hath blotted out the hand-writing of Ordinances, and took it out of the way, and nayed them to the Cross, triumphing over them, vers. 14, 15. Then the Apostle denied all Ordinances that were hand written, and said the Law was changed, and the Priesthood was changed, Heb. 7. 12. and the Commandement disanulled, so the Law now being changed, by which the Priesthood was made, and the Commandement disanulled, by which they took Tythes of the people, of God himself, and the hand-writing of Ordinances blotted out, therefore who art thou O man that goeth about to build again, set up, allow, write for, and uphold that which God put down, disanulled, and blotted out, and nayed to the Cross? Gods enemy thou art, whoever thou bee, for the earth is the Lords, and the fulness thereof, Psal. 24. 1. And all are commanded to honour God with their substance, who are his Stewards, Prov. 3. 9. Take heed how yee dishonour him by giving his goods to his open Enemies, who uphold, and maintain that which he hath disanulled, and witnessed against, for you that do so, are unprofitable Stewards, and hee will call you to an account of your Stewardship; And hee that is unjust in the least, is also unjust in much, Luke 16. 10, 11.

And

And if yee be not righteous in the unrighteous Mammon, who will commit to your trust the true riches? And if yee have not been faithful in that which is another mans, who shall give you that which is your own, hee that hath an ear to hear, let him hear and understand.

And if your Priests will take Tythes as they did in the time of the Law, see ye do the office of the Priests that took Tythes, they kept a Store-house, and the widows, and the fatherless, and the strangers which was within the Priests gate was fed; And if they do thus, they must own themselves to bee Ministers of the Law, and not of the Gospel; And if they do not thus, they rob the poor, the fatherless, the widows, and strangers, and neither are Priests of the Law nor Gospel; so from the Law and Gospel do wee shut them, who are neither in the steps of them, who were under the Law, nor in the steps of Christs Ministers, who was the end of the Law, so from being Ministers of either Law or Gospel, yee have cleared your selves, and shut your selves out by your practices.

And thou Priest Fogge of Liverpool, who said, They that hold forth the way of perfection, holdeth not the way of God; but from under this thou canst not get, but under the condemnation must come; for the way of God is perfect, which way is Jesus Christ, for, saith hee, I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh to the Father, but by mee. So thou that saith, The way of perfection, is not the way of God, art out of the way of God, and thy condemnation thou must own: So confesse thy error to the people, who hast spoken against Christ, who is the way of God, and the way to God, which way is perfect, and indures for ever.

So for the simple ones sake have I given this forth, who was at the meeting, and received not satisfaction, because of the disorder that day; That they might come to see their Teachers, who hath long deceived them, taking their goods from them, contrary to the Law of God written in mens hearts; so with the light which comes from Christ which convinceth you of sin, shall you see them to bee, such as the Prophet speaks of, and saith, Put into their mouths, and they cry, Peace, Peace, but put not into their mouths, and they prepare War against you, Mai. 3. 5.

And this is fulfilled by many of the Priests of England this day,

4
whosue many at the Law, and cast many into prison, because they put
not into their mouths: so, to the light of Christ in you all, take heed,
which is your way and Teacher, and from all false wayes, and
Teachers doth lead.

Given forth by him,

whom in scorn is called

QUAKER,

Thomas Holme.

QUAKERS

Q V A K E R S Principles quaking.

Friend and Friends,



Have perused your written Paper directed to the Priests, (as you are pleas'd to call them) and people in and about *Walton and Liverpool*, and you adde in one Clause of it, that for the simples sake you sent it forth, it was my purpose that one of those simple ones should return you an Answer, and I humbly beg upon the bended knees of my Soul, that the Answer I shall return may be so full of Gospel simplicity, that God may have the glory, my duty may be discharged, and your judgements rightly informed, and then I doubt not but some of you, at least, will consider from whence you are fallen *Rev. 3. 3.* and repent, and do your first works, and so prevent the Lords coming against you in fury, and in wrath, for I seriously profess, I look upon it as a very dangerous peece, to break our selves off, and rent our selves from the Church of God, for as *Gen. 9. 1, &c.* *Noahs* Ark was a clear Figure and Type of the Church of God, so *Noahs* Dove is a clear embleme of such as through affectation of new and unknown paths do stray from the Church of God, and forsake the assemblies of the Saints, as the manner of some is, *Heb. 10. 25.* And I pray you observe with me what became of *Noahs* Dove whilst she was out of the Ark, and you shall finde she found no rest for the sole of her foot till she return'd to the Ark, *Gen. 9. 9.* and *Noah* took her in again; and let me tell you this Scripture (as well as other Scriptures) *Rom. 15. 4.* was written for our learning; consider what I say, and the Lord, if it be his good pleasure, give you understanding, *2 Tim. 2. 7.*

But before I come to the Answer of your Paper, let me tell you at what I very much wonder, *viz.* That you should make use of the Scriptures to prove what your deluded Fancies would hold forth, and yet will not acknowledge them to be the Word of God; I know what you are ready to say, *viz.* That Christ is the Word, and I through Gods mercy know it as well as you, and am, I bless God, able in some measure to distinguish between the Word of God, and God the Word; yet let me tell you, if I did not believe really that Jesus Christ and the Scriptures speak one and the same thing, or that Jesus Christ the internal Word, and the Bible, or Book of God, the external word, were both one, I would as soon prove

my Tenents from the *Turkish Alchoron* as from the Scriptures, which were Blasphemy for me once to imagine.

And now to the answer of your Paper, in which I have observed, and seriously considered three things; 1. From whence it came. 2. To whom it is directed; and 3. The subject matter of it, which indeed favours so much of rayling and reproach, that I dare not answer you in your own Language, least I should betray my self not to be guided by the Spirit of God, which is a spirit of meekness.

But to the First of these, *viz.* from whence it came, I have only this one word to say, *viz.* it came from a people that I look upon as objects of much pity, not of envie; a people that I have sometimes been very intimate with, at least some of you; A people with whom I have taken sweet counsel when we have walked to the House of God together, as friends; a people that I have dearly loved with Christian love, a people that I have often prayed with, and shall not yet cease to pray for, *Luk. 10. 20. Luk. 15. 4, 5*, that as many of you as have your names written in Heaven, may be brought back upon the shoulder of Gods power to the Fold of Christ, from whence yee are gone astray, *1 Pet. 2. 25.* and thus much I am confident of, with which I will conclude, that if it please God to grant me my request at this point, there will be joy not only in Heaven at your return, *Luke 15. 7.* but matter of praise and glory to God in the Soul of him, that will not cease to pray for you; though some of you lately professed, he durst not pray for me, because I was (as he said) Gods enemy; but I am confident sometimes he and I professed our friendship with God, and our love to God, both with one joynt consent; I bless God I am the same still, and if he be not, let him seriously consider which of us are fallen from our own stedfastness, *2 Pet. 3. 17.* and so declared our selves to be Gods enemy.

And now I shall proceed to the Second Particular that I observed in your Paper, *viz.* The persons to whom it was directed, namely to the Priests, (as you are pleased to call them) and the people in and about *Walton*, and *Liverpool*, and especially written for the sake of the simple.

As to the name Priest, I should not be troubled at it at all, were it not given by you to the Ministers of the Gospel, as a brand of reproach; for indeed I finde it to be one of those honourable Titles, that God hath given to the dispensers of his Word and Ordinances in all Ages. They are sometimes called the Lords Priests, *Exod. 19. 6. 2 Chron. 6. 41.* sometimes the Lords Pastors, *Ier. 3. 15.* sometimes the Lords Shepherds, *Cant. 1. 8.* sometimes the Watchmen of *Israel*, *Ezek. 3. 17. Isa. 61. 6.* and many other honourable Titles God is pleased to put upon his Priests that hee
cloathes

cloathes with his Righteousness, *Psal.* 132. 16. and appoints to wait at his Altars, *1 Cor.* 9. 13. But you will say, These are legal Titles given under the Law, but we are not under the Law, but under Grace, and the Gospel of grace. To which I shall have occasion to speak more fully, when I come to the subject matter of your Paper, I shall only say in this Section with a learned man, whose Works I lately saw, that the cause why many are so ignorant of Christ and his Apostles, is, because they are no better acquainted with *Moses* and *Aaron*. But if we look into the Gospel as well as the Law, we shall finde no less honourable Titles given to the Ministers of the Gospel, than of old time was given to the dispensers of the Law; we finde a Catalogue of them in *Ephes.* 4. 11. they are there called Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers; and though their names be here differently expressed, yet their honourable Work is the same, *viz.* for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ, which is the Church.

And here is one thing observable, *viz.* That God is pleased both under the Law, and under the Gospel to give one and the same name to the Dispensers of his Word and Ordinances, I mean Pastors, if we compare this, *Ephes.* 4. 11. with *Jer.* 3. 15. and not only in point of name, but office also, as shall by the assistance of God further appear in the next Section. But further, they are called Christs Disciples, *Joh.* 13. 5. the Preachers of the Gospel, *Matth.* 16. 15. *2 Cor.* 4. 5. and with which I will conclude, they are called the Lords Embassadors, *2 Cor.* 5. 20. nay the Lord gives them the honourable title of Angels, *Rev.* 3. 1. &c.

These things considered, may we not conclude with our Saviours own words, *He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me,* *Luke* 10. 16. from which sentence the Lord keep me, and the whole Israel of God. I have now for brevities sake done with one of the Parties to whom you direct your Paper, *viz.* the Priests, (as you call them) and for the People, I confess I have not had opportunity to speak with many of them since I saw your Paper, but as many of them as I have had any conference with about it, I assure you the greatest number of them looked upon your Paper as such an empty inconsiderate Peece, that they concluded it was not worthy answering, yet as you say, it was written for the sake of the simple; I assure you, it is for their sakes that are endued with the humble simplicity that is in Christ that I undertook this present answer.

And now come we to the subject matter of your Paper, which Centers it self in these two things; 1. Concerning the lawfulness, or unlawfulness of giving, and receiving of Tythes; and 2. Concerning per-

perfect here, in the body, or whilst we continue in the body.

To the First of these, *viz.* concerning Tythes, I would gladly know, whether you will acknowledge the whole Scripture to be the Word of God, or no, I mean the whole Bible, the Old Testament and the New; if you will acknowledge the whole, I shall need say no more for the lawfulness of giving, and receiving of Tythes, than you have said against the lawfulness thereof; for you have cited several Scriptures that make full for them, as that in *Deut.* 14. 22, 23. compared with *Mat.* 3. 8. & 10. in that of *Deuteronomy*, the Lord takes care, and giveth charge not only concerning the bringing in of Tythes, but for the true bringing in of them, as though the Lord were resolved not to abate them any thing of that proportion that he had commanded, not only in relation to the quantity but quality also; so at the twenty third verse, *Thou shalt eat before the Lord thy God in the place that the Lord shall chuse to place his Name there, not only the tythe of thy Corn, but of thy Wine, and of thine Oyl, and of the firstlings of thy Flocks, and of thy Herds, &c.* and the reason of all is added, *viz.* *That thou maist learn to fear the Lord thy God, not only during this year and the next, &c. but always;* nay, the Lord takes care, as I may say, concerning such excuses as some, like your selves, might make against the punctuality of this performance, in relation to the distance of the place that the Lord should chuse, from the place of some of the peoples residence. Some of the people might say, I hope I may be excused; alas, the way is too farre, and the burthen that I am to bear is too heavie for me to carry so long a journey, may not I be dispenced with? No, saith the Lord, if the burthen be too heavie, and the journey too long, then shalt thou in such a case turn thy Tythes into Mony, and shalt bring thy due proportion in Mony in thy hand. As if the Lord had said, I will not abate thee any thing, neither will I be put off with any excuses, or pretences that thou canst make, but that which I require thou shalt truly perform; but you will say this is Law, why then let us take a step further, and see what the Prophets say to it, and here again you have answered your selves, *Mat.* 3. 8. will a man rob God, it should seem by this text that your opinion is no new thing, but as old as this Prophecie, for the very same colour that yee pretend, the Lord intimates to be this peoples pretence, *viz.* *Wherein have we robbed thee? why saith the Lord, in Tythes and Offerings; and me thinks there is abundance of emphasis in the tenth verse, by you likewise quoted, Bring yee in all the Tythes into the store-house, that there may be meat in my House, and prove me now herewith saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open windows in Heaven, and pour down such a blessing as there shall not be room to receive it; as if the*

Lord

Lord had said, Do yee pretend a scarcity of the fruits of the earth, so as yee cannot spare the Tythe that I require of you? why you may thank your selves, for your unwillingness to pay them, that the increase of your Fields, and of your Flocks and Herds is so slender, or that I have blessed your increase no better; but prove me now, bring in the full of your Tythes, keep nothing back, and see if I will not so bless your increase, as that not only your Barnes, and your Wine-presses, and your Stalls, &c. shal be full, but there shall not be room to receive them. And were it not to hold a Candle to the Sun, I might adde many more Scriptures both out of the Law, and Prophets, that would speak the same thing. As also of the largeness and bountifulness of the provision that God made for his Ministers that waited at his Altars even under the Law. And have wee any grounded reason to produce, why God should be straiter handed in his allowance of maintenance for his Ministers that he hath imployed in more excellent work; for so is Gospel-work, when it is compared with Legal-work?

But you are ready to take me here at my own word, and to reply, that all that I have said concerning Tythes is Legal, and from the Law, though you know it is partly from the Law, and partly from the Prophets. But you will say again, the Law and Prophets are all one, yea and so say I too; and further I affirm, That *Moses*, and the Prophets, and the Gospel are all one in substance, and in effect the very same thing, they are all the word of one and the same immutable and unchangeable God; I might prove this abundantly, but for brevity sake this one Scripture shall serve for, and instead of many; and methinks it might, it is so full, *Heb. 1. 1, 2. God who at sundry times, and in divers manners spake in times past to our Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed to be heir of all things, by whom also hee made the Worlds.*

I pray you observe with me, God, one and the same God, spake, spake one and the same word, yea at sundry times, and in divers manners, to our Fathers by the Prophets, to us by his Son, but to both, one and the same word. So then we may conclude, the immutable God, who was yesterday to our fore-fathers, to day to us, and the same for evermore, hath spoken a Word, and left us a Word like himself, unchangeable in the substance of it, though changeable in the administration of it, according to the good pleasure of God the speaker of it, yet the same Word spoken to his people, whether in old time by his Prophets, or in the fulness of time by his Son, *Gal. 4. 4, 5.* or in the declining of time by the Ministers of the Gospel; so then we see how dangerous a thing it is for us to separate, or

put asunder what God hath so joyned together, that it is no more two but one, I mean his whole entire and individual word; and if this be granted, the controversie is easily decided.

But you say further, This Law so much insisted upon, together with the Priest-hood of it, is changed, and the Commandement disannulled, and this you bottom upon *Heb. 7. 12. & 18.* the very same words that you mention in your Paper, I confess is here the Scripture-word; yet let mee tell you, if we should take every word in Scripture in the bare letter of it, not weighing the sence and meaning of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures, such absurdities would follow as you and I little think of; for instance one amongst many, it were easie for me to prove that you have no faith, or for you to prove that I have none, if we only look upon the letter of one text of Scripture, and our Saviours own words, *Matth. 17. 20. Verily I say unto you, if you have faith as a grain of Mustard-seed, yee shall say to this mountain, be thou removed hence to yonder place, and it shall remove, and nothing shall be impossible to you.* Observe, Faith as a grain of Mustard-seed, which our Saviour elsewhere saith is the least of Seeds, yet if so small a quantity of faith be in you, Mountains shall remove out of one place into another; but which of us can speak this word of faith so, as a mountain of stone, or earth, shall thus remove. I bless God I know how to understand this Scripture better, but I say, if we take this Scripture in the letter of it, who hath any faith at all? when so small a quantity of it will do so great a work.

Therefore I say, the sence and scope of the Spirit of God must be inquired of in all Scripture readings, or else there are many things in the very Epistles of the Apostle *Paul*, that are hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unskilful do wrest to their own destruction, as they also wrest all other Scriptures, *2 Pet. 3. 16.* and therefore let us enquire into the meaning of this change of Law and Priest-hood, and of this disannulling of the Commandement, and we are right at this point, or else not. As for the change of the Priest-hood, it is in relation to the manner of Administration, not in point of Office; for though the Sacrifices of Burnt Offerings be taken out of the way, being nayled to the Cross of Christ, yet there remains the Sacrifice of Prayer and Supplication, with giving of thanks, *1 Tim. 2. 1.* to be offered up upon the Altar, the Lord Jesus Christ, which is to God a Sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour, *Ephes. 5. 2.* and indeed is the sum and substance of all Burnt Offerings. So *David*, *Thou requirest not Sacrifice, else would I give it thee, thou delightest not in Burnt Offerings; but, the sacrifice of God is a contrite spirit, a broken and a humble heart O God thou wilt not despise, Psal. 51. 17.* So if I should instance

instance in all the particular injunctions of the Ceremonial Law it self, we should find only the manner of Administration changed, not the matter, substance, and equity of any one of them; for instance in one of the meanest of them, There was a Law of divers washings of hands, and cleansing of cups and vessels, &c. These are all taken away in respect of the manner of them; but the substance and equity of these yet remain, *Wash thy heart O Jerusalem, how long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee*, Jer. 4.14. and *Isa. 1.16.* And our Saviour taking notice of the strictness of the Pharisees about these washings, saith, *Ye make clean the outside of the cup and platter, but the inside is full of filthiness and uncleanness*, Mat. 23.25,26. And so David, *I will wash my hands in innocency, so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord*, Psal. 26.6. By all which Scriptures, we see that the summe and substance of all the Law, even of the Ceremonial part it self remains unchangeable, though the manner of Administration be not onely changed, but disanulled, and taken out of the way; as the lesser light, to wit, of a Candle, is swallowed up of the greater light, to wit, the Sun.

Thus we see how the Priests work is changed, viz. in point of Administration onely, and so the Priests are changed in point of their Administration-work; but in respect of the order of the Priesthood, it is not changed; For Christ is a Priest for ever after the Order of *Melchisedeck*, so that from everlasting to everlasting, the Priesthood in point of substance, is one and the same for ever.

I might instance in the Sacraments of old, under the Law, and make it out that the summe and substance of them, not only remain the same, but are more lively held forth in those two Sacraments that Christ hath instituted, and left to continue in his Church to his second coming, 1 Cor. 11.26 *Mat. 28.19,20.* And what is held forth in the Gospel, Israel had under the Law, though more obscurely held forth; *Yet they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink of the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, which Rock is Christ*, 1 Cor. 10.2,3,4. And Christ saith of Abraham, *That he rejoiced to see Christs day, he saw it, and was glad*, Joh. 8.56.

But you say further, the Commandement is disanulled, I shall say so too, if you mean the rigor and curse of it, in relation to the Covenant of Works, so as that it is not now, Do this and live, in the same circumstantial manner as it was under the Law; but the equity, summe, and substance remains to this day, viz. In manifesting our obedience to the Gospel of Christ, as before to the Law of God; not, as I said even now, in the same circumstantial manner, but in another equivalent to it, viz. in repentance, faith,

faith, love, and new obedience, without which no salvation; and in truth, when I seriously consider the Law and Gospel, I find the Law to be nothing else but Gospel foretold, and the Gospel nothing else, but the Law fulfilled; where lyes now the disanulling of the Commandement, except in the sence before mentioned; for as to the total annihilating, disanulling, or destroying the Law, our Saviour disclaims it in his own words, *I came not to destroy, but to fulfil the Law*, Matth 5. 17. And the Apostle Paul having spoken largely to these forementioned distinctions, lest any should (as you seem to do) mistake him, and from his own words utterly abrogate, and make void, and useless the Law, he saith in plain words, *Do wee then destroy the Law? God forbid, we rather establish the Law*; Rom. 3. 31. And in truth, I find our blessed Lord and Saviour, so far from destroying the moral Law, that he rather sets a sharper edge upon it, and makes it of greater force, and more binding in reference to the strict observance of it; for saith he, *It hath been said of old, Matth. 5. 27. 28. thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, he that shall look upon a woman, so as to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*: And whereas Moses suffered the putting away of wives upon dislikes, and disagreements, Christ tells us, If any man put away his wife for any cause, save for the cause, and in the case of Fornication hath broken the Law, and he that shall marry her that is divorced committeth Adultery, *Mat. 5. 32*. And though these things, and others of the like nature, were not so expressly set down in the Moral Law, yet they were fully included in the Commandement; by all which we plainly see the harmony and agreement between Law and Gospel.

And thus having briefly, yet plainly explained, wherein the Law and Priesthood is changed, and the Commandement disanulled, I proceed to the great question in controversie, *viz.* concerning the lawfulness, or unlawfulness of giving and receiving Tythes; and that as briefly and plainly as I can.

Now as we have seen the equity of the Law of God held forth in the Gospel in some cases; so we may, if we will, see it held forth in this very case of Tythes, *1 Cor. 9. 14*. Even so hath the Lord ordained, That they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel. I would gladly have any of you, to shew me where and when this Ordination of God by the Apostle here cited, was made manifest. I know you could, if you would; but in regard you cast off the Law as useless, I pray you see how you differ from the mind of the Apostle; you need not to go far for this, only cast your eye upon the 9. vers. of the forecited Chapter, and you shall see. It is written, saith the Apostle, in the Law of Moses, and here

at this 14. vers. Even so hath the Lord ordained, as if the Spirit of God foreseeing such a generation of men as you are, going about to rent and tear one part of the word of God from another, he here joyns them in such an inseparable bond, as the whole world is never able to unloose, and not only so, but draws all that is necessary to be received of us, in point of comfortable maintenance of the Ministry, into an intire doctrinal conclusion, viz. That those that preach the Gospel should live of it, is Gods own Ordinance; and this he proves by Scripture from the 25. of *Dent.* 4. and having thus proved it by Scripture, he argues it from several reasons drawn first from the equity of it, vers. 7. *Who goeth a warfare at any time, at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?* But further, *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we reap your carnal things?* vers. 11.

Again do we not know, *That they that Minister about holy things, live of the things of the Temple, and they that wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar?* vers. 13. But you may perhaps say, This was so in the time of the Law, but ought it so to be now? yea saith the Apostle, *Even so hath the Lord ordained, that they that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel;* as if he should say, It not only was so, but still remains to be Gods own Ordinance, even so hath the Lord ordained.

Secondly, He argues it from his power and authority, *Am I not an Apostle,* vers. 1. *Have we not power to eat and drink, &c?* vers. 4. have other Apostles this power, and am I, and *Barnabas* only exempted from this power? I tell you nay, or say I this only as a man, or of my self, or for my own ends? sure I do not, but the Lord saith it as well as I, *Is it not written in the Law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the corn;* Or again, doth the Lord here onely take care for Oxen? indeed he doth out of his fatherly care and providence provide for man and beast, *Psal.* 36. 6. all which I very well know, yet I tell you, the Lord speaks not this only out of his care of Oxen, but for our sakes, for my sake, and for the sake of all those that God shall call to be Ministers of the Gospel; and doubtless he saith it altogether for our sakes, *That he that ploweth may plow in hope, and he that thresheth may be partaker of his hope,* vers. 10. And though the Apostle for the good and increase of the Church of God, and for the gaining of some that out of carnality of heart might argue against being at charges upon the Ministers of the Gospel, that labour in the Word and Doctrine, I say, for the gaining of their souls, he sometimes forbears the exercise of his power, and rather labours with his hands; yet he fully asserts this power to be put into his hand.

hand, to forbear working in a secular imployment, and to receive wages for Gospel-work, such as might be his livelyhood and living, so as to live of the Gospel, vers. 14. Neither doth the Apostle onely assert the lawfulness of taking wages for Gospel-work, but also acknowledgeth, that himself had taken wages; I robbed other Churches, taking wages of them to do you service. It seems to me the Apostle *Paul* sometimes met with people as unwilling to part with wages for Gospel-work, as many are in these dayes, and in such a case, he laid by the exercise of his power, and made use of such as were more willing to minister to him, of the good things that they had, that by his lenity and gentleness, he might gain the refractory; himself saith, *He became all things to all men, that by all means hee might gain some*, vers. 22. But his power hee asserts to the utmost, if others be partakers of this power over you, are not wee rather? though we have not made use of this our power, but suffered all things, lest wee should hinder the Gospel, vers. 12. his aime being to gain, and to win more upon mens hearts hereby, and to see the number of Christs flock increased, that he made himself servant to all, that was yet free from all, vers. 19.

But it may be you will grant that the Ministers of the Gospel ought to receive wages for Gospel-work, and to live of the Gospel, though this is more than many will grant; yet what makes all this for receiving of Tythes? to this I have onely two words to say, and I pray you observe them both.

First, It is clear to me, That the duty of paying a competent allowance to Gods Ministers, such as they may live on, by what hath been already said, and much more that might have been said for it, though the way, form, and kind in which this wages ought to be paid, is not so cleer from the New Testament, as it is from the Old, and I hope where a duty is enjoined in one part of the word of God, and the manner of performance said nothing of in that part of the word, yet in another part of the same word it is expressly set down; It must needs be safer to walk by the subscribed Rule, than either to walk without Rule, or to cast off duty.

And indeed for all you say, that Scripture, *Luke 11.42.* makes nothing to the purpose concerning the matter in hand; yet in my apprehension, it makes much for the payment of Tythes: for our Saviour blames not the Pharisees for taking of them, but that they only eyed the profits and benefits that came by them, and neglected the weightier things of the law, viz. judgement, and love, &c. for saith he, *This ought ye to have done, and not to have left the other undone.*

And

And whereas you say this was before Christ was offered up, I grant it is true, but shall we therefore conclude that Christ would speak so favourably of a thing, whilst he continued in the World, that hee would condemn and abandon when he came to his Father? were not this as much in effect as to force Christ to deny himself in point of his Deity, and to make both him, and his Word mutable and changeable, from which assertion the Lord keep all that expect Salvation in by and through the Lord Jesus Christ.

And thus farre I have admitted of your sence of this Scripture, *Luk. 11. 42. viz.* That the *Pharisees* received Tythes, * and if it be taken in this sence, it is clear our Saviour blames them not for taking of them, but that they only looked upon the profits that came by them; but if wee consult with your Paper.

Mat. 23. 23. we shall find the *Pharisees* rather paid Tythes than received them, which sence I rather take to be the true and ingenuine sence of these Scriptures; for the *Pharisees* were not all Priests, if any of them were so, but rather a separated Sect of people alone by themselves, very singular for external performances, but little regarded the weightier things of the Law, *viz.* Judgement, and the Love of God, &c. Now if we take it in this sence, our Saviour blames not the *Pharisees* for paying of Tythes, but in that they concluded, this being done, there was no more to do: but now let us joyn and compare these two Scriptures together, and what will be the result, but clearly and plain'y this? *viz.* That neither the taking nor giving of Tythes was by our Saviour condemned, but rather approved of to be a duty, only resting in the external performance of this duty is by Christ reproved and condemned, for saith he, This ought yee to have done, and not to have left the other undone.

Besides, *Abraham* (in whose loyns *Levie* was) paid Tythes to *Melchisedeck* before the Law was given, *Gen. 14. 20. & Heb. 7. 4.* and *Christ is a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedeck*; so then, the order of the Priesthood was before the Law, and continued after the Law, even for ever. And if it was a Spiritual Rite before the Law, as it must needs be, else the Patriark *Abraham* in whose loyns *Levie* was, would not have paid them; but it is clear, he paid them, *Heb. 7. 10.* by which it plainly appears Tythes are a Spiritual Rite, belonging to a spiritual and unchangeable Priest-hood; and if so, they must needs of Divine right belong to the servants of *Melchisedecks* order; but the Ministers of the Gospel are Servants of *Melchisedecks* order, therefore to them of Divine right Tythes belong; for Christ is a Priest not after the Order of *Aaron*, but after that unchangeable Order of *Melchisedeck*. And methinks that practice of *Jacob*,

Jacob, Gen. 28. is full for this present purpose, he was going about a weighty business, in pursuance of a command received from *Isaac* his Father. God is with him, and in his journey appeareth to him in a Dream, lets him see a Ladder reaching from earth to Heaven, upon which the Angels ascended, and descended; *Jacob's* eyes are opened, and he cries out, *The Lord is in this place, and I knew it not*, vers. 16. He is terrified at the Lords presence, and saith, *How dreadful is this place? it is none other but the House of God, and the gate of Heaven*, vers. 17. And observing these things, he vows a vow, vers. 20. saying, *If the Lord will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my fathers house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set up for a pillar (mentioned before in vers. 18.) shall bee Gods House, and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee.* It is clear to me from this Scripture, that *Jacob* acknowledgeth a tenth part of his substance to be of Spiritual right due unto the Lords House, and he enters into a vow to perform his duty herein. And if it was a Spiritual right belonging to Gods House, it must needs of Divine right belong to Gods Servants that waite upon the service of his house; these servants not being servants to such a Priest-hood as was subject to change (for *Aarons* Priest-hood was not then erected) but servants to an unchangeable Priest-hood, even after the Order of *Melchisedeck* which endeth not, for Christ continues a Priest for ever after the same Order, all along in these Scriptures held forth, viz. the order of *Melchisedeck*. See for this *Heb. 7. 16. & 17.* who is made not after the Law of a carnal Commandement, but after the power of an endless life, for he testifieth, *Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedeck.* So then wee see it pleased the most wise God, whose is the earth, and the fulness thereof, to appoint such a proportion as the tenth part, both before the Law, and under the Law, and never after expressly to take it off. Who art thou, oh man, that dare say it is an unmeet proportion, unless thou wilt acknowledge thy self to be wiser than God?

But since the legal proportion is displeasing to some, I desire those that are displeased therewith, strictly to observe the charge of the Apostle *Paul*, who was an Apostle to the *Gentiles*, and I doubt not but all truly godly Ministers of the Gospel will be well satisfied; the charge is this, *Let him that is taught in the Word, communicate to him that teacheth, in all good things*, Gal. 6. 6. now Tythes are good things, they are the fruits of the earth, which fruits are called precious fruits, *Jam. 5. 7.* And in truth the Apostle gives not this charge without good cause, for the Ministers

ters are commanded to give themselves to study to approve themselves un-
to God, Workmen that need not to bee ashamed, rightly dividing the
word of truth, 2 *Tim.* 2. 15. and their care ought to bee laid out for the
Churches of God, 2 *Cor.* 11. 28. so as that it must needs follow they can-
not lay out such care for their Temporal provision as others, whose call is
not so immediately to the Lords work as theirs is. And it seems to me the
good Lord of the house, who careth for his, 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. took special care
that they that minister in the Word and Doctrin should bee comfortably
provided for without this care, though I confess it was to *Timothy* that
Paul writ, when he affirmed, that if any provide not for his own, especi-
ally for them of his own house, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than
an Infidel, 1 *Tim.* 5. 8. & 18. that text formerly mentioned, *Deut.* 14.
22. & *Deut.* 25. 4. is again quoted by the Apostle, as if he would again,
and again, couple Law and Gospel together, to speak one and the same
thing in point of comfortable provision, for the Ministers of the Gospel, and
argues it from good reason, viz. *The labourer is worthy of his hire*,
and proves this Argument from our Saviours own words, *Mat.* 10. 10.

And but once more, with which I will conclude this Section, I find
our Saviour promising ample reward to any that shall put forth a charita-
ble hand towards any of his Ministers in a case of being fallen into poverty,
Matth. 10. 42. *Whosoever shall give to drink a cup of cold water to one
of these little ones in the name of a Disciple, shall not lose his reward*; and
at vers. 41. more pregnant to our present purpose, *He that receiveth a
Prophet in the name of a Prophet, shall receive a Prophets reward*. I
may say on the contrary, hee that shall take from a Prophet the right of a
Prophet, as he is a Prophet, or he that shall refuse to give entertainment
to a Prophet into his house, or into his heart, as a Prophet, may expect a
Prophets Curse, and what that is you may see, if you please to turn to
Zech. 11. 17. But you may perhaps say, If this provision bee made for
the Ministers, how should they fall into poverty? and yet let me tell you
such a thing once was, and Gods great care put forth concerning it, 2 *King.*
4. 1. &c. the Prophet was dead, and had left Wife and Children in debt,
but (which is worth our observing) rather than the Prophets debts shall
be unpaid, the Lord will work a Miracle, viz. empty vessels shall be filled
with Oyl, and the Oyl shall be sold, and the Prophets debts paid. Thus
we see Gods provision made for his Servants the Ministers cleared from
the Word of God, both out of the Old Testament and the New; the Old
sets out the proportion, viz. the tenth part; the New is silent as to the
proportion, but full for a comfortable furnishing of them with all good
things; his care is held forth for them, to the working of a Miracle, his

promise made to any that shall receive them, and minister to them, though but in a Cup of cold water; and if any yet out of a sinister end shall plead, that it is not by all this clear that they ought to receive Tythes. I have only one word more to say, and so conclude.

Secondly, It is not only clear by Scripture, but the Law and customs of Nations hath made choyse of this proportion, and of our Nation amongst the rest it hath been, and still is established by the Laws of the Land, and methinks upon very good ground, in regard a way more agreeable to Gods Word could not be found. Besides, which way could a more equall way be imagined, for doth not the Minister as well as the people in this thing, depend upon Gods blessing, or cursing the earth; whether his allowance shall bee more, or less; plentiful, or scarce; so as both Minister and people shall be in one capacity, either to bless God for plenty, or to wrastle with God in times of famine and scarcity, for the removal of the Judgements. Now seeing it is thus agreeable to the Law of God, and Nations, and so full of equity, who art thou O man that dare so desperately set thy self against both the Law of God and man, sure I am in my own experience, since I knew the right hand from the left, I never observed any that made a scruple of pretended conscience of paying Tythes, but they fell by little and little, not only to the denial of all maintenance to the Ministers, but even to the despising of them; though they cannot but know, that he that despiseth them, despiseth their Lord and Master the Lord Christ. I profess, I cannot conceive any reason why you should with such vehemency set your selves against the maintenance of the Ministry, unless it bee either; First, to bring them into reproach and ignominy, and so make them contemptible that God commands us to account worthy of double honour, and so on set purpose contradict God 1 Tim. 5. 17 or, Secondly, which indeed I rather judge to be the ground of it, viz. The cunning policy of Sathan, that knows well enough that this Doctrin will bee readily received of all that (out of meer covetousness) are loath to part with that which God requires, and it may be your deluded fancy to make use of this Doctrin, to increase the number of your Profelites, for there is not a covetous worldling but he will be ready to joyn with you in this Doctrin, seeing so fair a pretence made for it, viz. a case of Conscience, though he shall one day know, that this very Conscience shall rise up in Judgement and condemn him as a meer covetous wretch; I remember towards the close of your great Argument against Tythes, you draw towards what you chiefly aim at, and by your own rate of Argument go about to argue the Dispensers of Gods Word and Ordinances to bee neither Ministers of Law, nor Gospel, and usurp to your selves that power that was proper, and peculiar

to the Apostles of Christ, and indeed is now to the Ministers of the Gospel, *1 Tim. 1. 20. viz.* That great power of Excommunication, for say you from the Law and Gospel do we shut them, which is indeed the highest degree of Excommunication; but you have utterly disenabled your selves from having any thing to do in this matter, by breaking your selves off, and renting your selves from the mystical Body of Christ, which is his Church, in whose hand this power lyes, *1 Tim. 1. 20. with 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5.* and whereas you adde, That the Ministers had excluded themselves, if you mean those of them that gave you the meeting; I utterly deny it, for they have not rent themselves from the Church, neither hath the Church cast them off; you afterwards enjoyn them Confession and Repentance, and indeed I do, and they will acknowledge it a necessary duty; for the best of Gods people have sin enough to make confession of, and to bee humbled for, except those like your selves, who say they are whole, and need not the Phisitian; but let me tell you, if I hear a man crying out, Keep at a distance, come not near, for I am holier than thou, *Isa. 65. 5.* I would get as farre from that man in judgement and practise as I could, though I would be as near to him in affection, as I durst for fear of displeasing God.

I cannot but before I leave this point answer you in one of your reproachful expressions, that you make use of in your Paper, I call it reproachful, because you would from it cast reproach upon Gods Ministers, otherwise I acknowledge the words you bring in are the words of a Prophecy, and are these, Put into their mouthes, and they cry peace, peace, but put not into their mouthes, and they prepare warre, *Micha 3. 5.* and this you say is fulfilled in many of the Priests of *England*, who as you say, Sues many at the Law, and casts many into Prison, because they put not into their mouthes.

I confess, I know not one president of this nature, but if any be, I hope there is not a godly Minister in *England* that would steer this course towards any that were not well able to pay their dues, and indeed for those that are well able to pay, but out of a refractory gain-saying, and contradicting minde will not pay; I think the Minister should sin if he did not Sue such at Law, and my reasons are these two First, He should sin in tollering an evil example, that all covetous wretches would be ready to follow. Secondly, He would hereby frustrate that great end, for which the Law was made and ordained. The Law was not made for the good and gentle, and obedient, but for the stubborn, refractory disobedient, and lawless, that can and will not answer to their duty, so as to perform it.

It is true, it is desired that Christian Brethren would dwell so together in

love and unity, each one striving who should go before another in ready performance of every just and equal thing, that there needed no going to Law, according to that we read, *1 Cor. 6. 1. &c.* most of which Chapter is laid out on this very thing. But whilst we live in this world, there will bee Tares among the Wheat, there will be such men as Christians could not live amongst were it not for the Law; for all you so much disclaim the necessity of it, and not only so, but the very use of it.

But further, I have thus much to say in vindication of godly Ministers, they both preach against, and often times deny themselves in point of their own right, to avoyd this unchristian work of going to Law, and utterly set themselves against any that shall go about to fleece the Flock of Christ, and neglect the performance of their duty; and in their Sermons upon occasion, preach against careless Shepherds, blinde Watch-men, and dumb Doggs, as you can; yet for all this, if there be any that are not faithful in discharge of their Office, as *Moses* was faithful in all his house, *Numb. 12. 7.* shall we for such a ones sake condemn all the Lords Embassadors? God forbid, we might as well condemn all the twelve Disciples, and Apostles of Christ, because one of them was a Devil, which none that fears God, dare assert.

And now if any be not yet satisfied in this point, I refer him to the Labours of a learned Divine in his time, *viz. Bishop Hall*, who in a little Treatise of his, called, *Practical Cases of Conscience*, doth at large resolve the great Controversie about Tythes. And shall proceed to the other great Query mentioned in your Paper, and so take leave with you, and all of your Opinions till you return again, to the owning of the Truth of God, laid down in the Scriptures, and submit to order, and break yourselves off from disorder and confusion, which tends to every evil work, *Jam. 5. 16.*

And now to your Second great Question concerning Perfection, I must first lay down your own words, and then answer them, for I desire to be faithful, and not to wrong you in a syllable; your words are these; And thou Priest, *Fogge of Liverpool*, who said they that hold forth the way of perfection, holdeth not the way of God; but from under this thou canst not get, but under the Condemnation must come, and your reason is annexed, *viz. for the way of God is perfect, which way is Jesus Christ*, for saith he, *I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh to the Father but by me*; but before I come to the Answer of this, from under the just censure of false accusation you cannot get (I use your own Language) for Mr. *Fogge* was farre from denying the way of God to be perfect, or from denying Christ to be the way, the truth, and the life. But

his

his Argument was, that neither you, nor any man, nor woman upon earth, had attained to perfection, so as to be absolutely perfect in this life. And for all he brought in many pertinent Scriptures to make good what he said, yet you stick not so far to abuse him, that you bury them all in silence, not mentioning one of them. I cannot conceive why you should do so, unless it be your aim to hold him forth to the world, to be so sottish, that he could not make good his Argument against yours; but blessed be God, there were many ear witnesses that day, but had there been none but your selves, and that you should make your boast thereof, yet I am confident no man indowed with reason, would give credit to you in such a thing; his abilities being better known than your own, I shall pass by that disorder, that you truly acknowledge was that day, which was the occasion that many received not satisfaction: For in truth, I know not how such a thing (as Order) could be expected from a people, that have cast off both order and decency, *I Cor. 14. 40.*

I shall now proceed to the direct Answer of your Question, *viz.* Whether perfection be attainable in this life, yea, or no? you say it is: I say it is not; except we take along with us these following limitations, or (as I may call them) these steps to, or degrees of perfection. I shall for your and my own better understanding, acknowledge four degrees of perfection, and acknowledge three of them attainable in this life, and the fourth unattainable; all which, I shall by the assistance of God, make clear by Scripture, and that very briefly.

First, There is an imputative perfection, that is, when the perfection of Christ is imputed to a man; and this was doubtless *Jobs* case, hee was a perfect man in Gods account, *Job 1. 8.* because God had in the eternal Decree of his unchangeable love, imputed the perfection of Christ to him, he laying hold thereon by faith, as it is written, *Abraham beleevd God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, Gen. 15. 6. and Rom. 4. 3.* which is all one with perfection; for that man that is perfectly righteous, is a perfect man, but there is none in himself, and from himself righteous, no not one, *Rom. 3. 10.* *There is none that doth good, no not one, vers. 12.* And therefore whoever thou art that boastest of standing upon the feet of thy own perfection, I say unto thee (in the name of the Lord) if thou standest at all, thou standest by faith, be not high minded, but fear, *Rom. 11. 20.*

Secondly, There is perfection in part, This is it the Apostle *Paul* owneth, *2 Cor. 13 9 10.* *For we know in part, and prophesie in part, but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is imperfect shall be done away.* And if any ask when this shall bee? the same Apostle

makes answer 1 Cor. 15. 54. *When this corruptible hath put on incorruption, and this mortal, hath put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that was written, Death is swallowed up in victory, Hos. 13. 4.* For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. And the same Apostle speaking of our bodies, saith, *It is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural, but is raised a spiritual body.* Now tell me where is the spiritual body, till it be raised from the dead? But I beleve, and am fully perswaded that though my body be sown in death a vile body, it shall in the resurrection be made like unto Christs glorious body, *Philip. 3. 21.*

Thirdly, There is a comparative perfection; a man may be said to be a perfect man, in comparison of others that have not received the earnest of their inheritance, and of such we read, *Prov. 12. 26. The righteous man is more excellent than his neighbour, Ephes. 1. 14.* And indeed it is true, every godly man is more righteous, more excellent, and more perfect than his neighbour; for none but the truly godly walketh before God, in uprightness of heart. And that man that hath an upright and sincere heart, is in Gods account a perfect man. So *Noah* and *Abraham* are said to be perfect men, *Gen. 6. 9. and 17. 1.*

Fourthly, and lastly, There is an absolute perfection, as I said before, when we the members shall be made like Christ our head, *Col. 1. 18.* when we shall be glorified together with him, *Rom. 8. 17.* when these vile bodies shall be made like unto his glorious body. When all the remainders of corrupt nature shall be consumed in Gods furnace (I mean the grave) but whilst we continue in the body, wee are said to be absent from the Lord, *2 Cor. 5. 8.*

This absolute perfection then is not attainable here in this life, which is the thing I am now to prove, and by Gods assistance shall do it,

First, By Scripture.

Secondly, By undeniable Argument, and so draw to a conclusion.

And first for the first, I might fill up much room with places that would speak fully to this point; but as our Saviour saith, *In the mouth of two or three witnesses, every word shall be established.* I shall bring in two or three which I hope may suffice.

And first, *Job* that was a perfect man in the sense I before mentioned, viz. in Gods account, yet in your sense he utterly disclaims it, *Job 9. 20. If I justify my self, my own mouth shall condemn me.* And after *Job* had been as it were expostulating with God, and pleading his own innocency and integrity, and as it were, Gods hard dealing with him, and had in the bitter-

bitterness of the anguish of his soul cursed the day of his birth, &c. I say, after all this, when Job comes to himself, he cries out against himself, *I abhor my self, and repent in dust and ashes*, Job 42.6. If Job had been perfect, what needed he to have repented; but further, we find the Apostle Paul disclaiming perfection in himself, Phil. 3.12,13. *Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect, but I follow after, &c.* And at vers. 14. *Errethren, I count not my self to have apprehended, but this one thing I do, forgetting those things that are behind, and reach forth towards those things that are before, &c.* And at vers. 15. *Let as many as be perfect be thus minded;* as if the Apostle had said, The highest degree of perfection that I have attained to, is to be sensible of my own imperfection.

Secondly, Hee not only disclaims perfection in himself, but fully asserts that both Jew and Gentile are all under sin, and there is none righteous, no not one, there is none that doth good, no not one, &c. Rom. 3.9,10. See further for this, Isa. 64.6. *But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities like the wind, hath taken us away.* And what more plain against your doctrine of perfection, then these Scriptures?

But secondly, I shall prove it by Argument.

1 If we could attain to be absolutely perfect men, and free from sin, we should be freed from death; if Adam had not sinned, hee had not dyed, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely dye*, Gen. 2.17. And *the wages of sin is death*, Rom 6.23. From whence I argue, no work, no wages; no sin, no death; But it is appointed unto all men once to dye, and after death to come to judgement: And why so? Because all have sinned, Rom 5.12. *As by one man sin entred into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.* Sure then our perfection as well as our portion, is in reversion. So at vers. 5. *If we have been planted together with him in the likeness of his death, we shall bee also in the likeness of his resurrection.* Observe, as we are in the one, we shall be in the other.

2 If we were perfectly free from sin, we should be free from temporal punishments and afflictions, which are the fruits and effects of sin, otherwise God were unjust. But the best of Gods people are daily liable to temporal afflictions, therefore short of perfection.

3 If we were perfect, we could not sin at all, But in many things we offend all, James 3.2. And if we say that we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and there is no truth in us, 1 Joh. 1.8.

4 If we were perfect here, we should have the end of our hope here;

But

But if in this life onely, Christians had hope, they were of all men most miserable, 1 Cor. 15 19.

§ And lastly, If we could attain to absolute perfection here, we should enjoy our glorious and eternal rest here; but the Apostle was of another judgement; For, saith he, *Doubtless there remains a rest to the people of God, Heb 4.9.* Job likewise agrees with the Apostle, *Job 3.7.* and that holy man of God (*John the Divine*) heard other news, and that from Heaven too, *Rev. 14. 13.* *I heard a voyce from heaven saying unto me, Write, from henceforth, blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, even so, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works follow them.* So then our rest is in heaven, doubtless our perfection is not here.

But I remember you pleaded hard for perfection, that time the Ministers gave you the meeting at the *Greave-house* from these two Scriptures, viz. *How shall I that am dead to sin live any longer therein?* and again, *As the tree falls so it lyeth*; from whence you truly inferred, that as Death leaves a man, Judgement is sure to finde him; both which are the truths of God being rightly understood. As to the first of these, viz. *How shall I that am dead to sin live any longer therein?* it is true, I cannot, so as to make it my trade and living, nor yet so as to live in the least known sin, with allowance of my self therein, nor yet (as the Scripture phrase is) to tumble and wallow therein; as the Sow that is washed doth in the mire. But hence to assert, that he that is dead to sin is freed from sin, will not follow, for God knows many are the secret sins of the best of Gods people, and therefore *David*, a man after Gods own heart crys out unto the Lord, *Lord cleanse me from my secret sin*; and not only so, but hee prays earnestly that God would keep him, that presumptuous sins might not prevail over him, *Psal. 19. 13.* sure I am, *David* was sensible of his own imperfection.

But Secondly. *As the Tree falls, so it lyes*; or, *As Death leaves us, Judgement is sure to finde us.* For that man or woman that doth not here in this life by faith make good his proprietie and interest in the Lord Jesus Christ, shall never have benefit by him in the Life to come; for saith he, *He that beleeveth on me, hath eternal life, but he that beleeveth not is condemned already, Joh. 3. 16, 18.* I freely acknowledge living and dying in unbeleef, renders a man truly miserable; for as there is no praising of God in the Grave, so there is no actings of faith there, but *As the tree falls so it lyes*; but it follows not hence that we are perfect here, unless it be by faith in the Son of God, and in that sence I shall be of your judgement, for all Gods people as well as *Job*, do know that their Redeemer liveth,

veth, and that they shall see him at the last day, not with other, but their own eyes; and indeed Christ is perfection it self.

I have only Three things more to admonish you of, else I shall fall too short of a full answer to your Paper; First, one is concerning that Law, that you say is written in mens hearts, by which only they are to be guided. Secondly, Concerning that light you say is within a man, to which only he is to look; and Thirdly, Concerning your rayling, reviling, and unchristian Language that you ordinarily put forth, in both your speakings and writings; I am resolved to clear my self in the sight of God, of all malice and envie in what I shall say to these, and what I do speak, to speak in faithfulness.

And first, The Law written in mens hearts, it must needs be, either First the Law of God; or Secondly, The Law of Nature; or, Thirdly, No Law at all, but a delusion of Sathan; I shall be farre from judging any of you, and as free in desiring you to judge your selves, that you be not judged of the Lord. Mistake me not, I know all men and women shall come to Judgement; but my meaning is, if we judge our selves, we shall not be so judged, as to be condemned of the Lord. But to the matter in hand, If the Law you speak of be the Law of God, it cannot be repugnant to the Law of God, lest as a standing Rule for men to walk by, to the end of the world. I need not prove what I mean here, *viz.* Gods immutable and unchangeable Word, the Scriptures, which have been so clearly proved to bee one with God, that I need not say any more than what I have already said; but this I affirm, that whatever pretended colour you put upon it, if it be not Law and Testimony proof, I shall give no credit to it, for to the Law, and to the Testimonies, if they speak not according to this word, it is because they have no light in them, *Isa 8. 20.*

Secondly, If it were the Law of Nature, for all there might bee differences in judgement, there would not be in Natural affection, and therefore disciphnering out some, that Sathan had gotten into his power, so as to bee led Captive by him at his wil, he sets this mark or brand upon them, that all men might know them, *viz.* without Natural affection. Again, if it were the Law of Nature, it would lead us to acts and expressions of Human Civility, for the best of Gods Saints were always ready to give civil Language, and modest expressions to the worst of Gods enemies, even to their Persecutors; nay, our blessed Saviour speaking to *Judas*, saith, *Friend, betrayest thou me with a kiss?* *Matth. 26. 49, 50.* But you dare not afford Civil deportment, and Language to godly and holy men, no not to the Ministers and Embassadors of the Lord Jesus Christ, for fear of offending against this Law, you say men ought to be guided by; but the good Lord

guide me by his Law written in the Scriptures, and if it be his will give you both will, and skill to judge aright of that Law written within, and if it be not according to Gods Law, to look upon it as the delusion of the strong man armed, that will be sure to keep the House, till a stronger than he come in his power and throw him out, *Mark 3. 27.*

I come now to the Second Admonition, concerning that Light you say is within a man, to which he only is to look; I conceive it must either be, First, The light of Nature; or, Secondly, The light that cometh by the illuminating Spirit of God, or else no light at all, but darkness put for light, *Isa. 5. 20.*

But for the first of these, *viz.* The Light of Nature, you utterly disclaim it, for you are no more Natural, but Spiritual, and that not only in part, but in perfection. I say as I said before, I judge you not, you stand and fall to your own Master. But that you and I may the better judge our selves, and of this light within us, I conceive it will be our wisdom to try of what kind it is, by observing whither it leads us; and

First, If it lead us with joy and delight to the Assemblies of the Saints, to the place where God hath promised his more special presence, to the Church of God, the ground and pillar of truth, *1 Tim. 3. 15.* I should then look upon it, as sometimes *David* did, *Even as a Lanthorn to my feet, and a light unto my paths, Psal. 119. 105.* but if any mans soul draw back, Gods soul will have no pleasure in that man; and, *If any man put his hand unto the Plow, and look back, he is not apt to the Kingdom of God;* But it may be you will object the thing I aime it, *viz.* The joyning of your selves to our Churches you dare not do, because there is corruption in them. I answer, it is truly desired of all Gods people, that there were none. But we know there will be Tares among the Wheat; though the Servants of the Lord of the Harvest would gladly have them plucked up, and weeded out, yet it is the Lord of the Harvest his Decree, that they shall grow together till the Harvest, not that hee hath an eye upon the Tares, but lest whilst his servants going about to pluck up the Tares, should pluck up the Wheat also, *Mat. 13. 28, 29, 30.*

Secondly, If this light lead us to the imbracing of Gods whole, intire, and individual word, in the love of it, if it lead us to close with Christ in sweet communion in those his Ordinances, that are by him appointed, not only for the begetting, but also increasing and strengthening of Faith, and all other Graces of his Spirit, I mean the Sacraments of the New Testament, so as we can receive Soul-refreshment, and Grace-strengthening thereby; I say, if this light lead us this way, I should be assured it were the Spirit of God, otherwise I cannot but look upon it, as a delusion of Sathan, to which

God

God had in Justice given me up, because I would not embrace him in the tenders of his love in the Gospel, and because I would not receive his Word in the love of it, he had given me up to believe a Lye, and to hearken to the Father of Lyes, who though he transform himself into an Angel of Light, yet goes about by all deceiveableness of unrighteousness to delude poor souls, to their utter destruction and perishing. I therefore desire that you and I might be careful to try the spirits, whether they be of God or no, for many false spirits, as well as false Prophets, are gone out into the world, 1 Joh. 4. 1.

I have but one word more, and I have done, methinks it should not be the work of the Spirit of God to revile Gods Ministers, and his servants, for indeed I finde it ranked amongst the works of the flesh, Galath. 5. 21. And else-where the Spirit of God ranks Revilers amongst such as shall not inherit the Kingdom, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. and indeed your inhuman Raylings, false and slanderous Accusations, unchristian Judgings, and Censures that you ordinarily pass upon all that are not of your Opinions, what do they but render you to be a people that take to your selves that boldness that an Angel of God durst not do, when hee was to deal in dispute with the Devil of Hell? for saith the Text, *He durst not bring against him a rayling accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee, Jude 9.* I pray observe what a strange expression the Holy Ghost makes use of here; an Angel of God, an Arch-Angel, the best of Created Creatures, disputing with the Devil, worse than the worst of men, yet durst not, I say, durst not bring against him a rayling accusation; but it is too apparent, that men below the Angels of Heaven dare bring rayling accusations against those that are farre enough above Devils, *For God made man a little lower than the Angels, Psal. 8. 5, 6.* If I had not just occasion to blame you for your rayling accusations against them, that cannot be denied to be your Fellow-Creatures, if no more could be said for them. But your bolt is shot against Gods choycest Servants, and which I desire may be seriously considered, Sathan is called, *The Accuser of the Brethren, Revel. 12. 10.* these things considered, I desire you and I may in good earnest examine our selves, and if we finde our selves guilty, judge our selves, and as farre as you are found in fault, I heartily wish (if it be the good pleasure of God) you may be truly sensible of it, and return, and joyn your selves to the Communion of the Saints in the Publick Ordinances of God, that we may have as sweet Fellowship and Communion with the Father and the Son, and with one another, as ever we had before your going out from us, by which you have declared your selves not to be of us, for had you been of us, doubtless you would have continued with us, 1 Joh. 2. 19.

And, with which I will conclude, if either you, or any man, or men, teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Doctrine which is according to godliness, (let him pretend as much humility as he can) *He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envie, strife, raylings, evil surmisings,* 1 Tim. 6. 3. 4. I desire this, and all other Scriptures that are written, may be as effectual to you, as sometimes the reading of the thirteenth Chapter to the Romans was to Saint *Augustin*, and it shall rejoyce my heart.

I charge you, that this Epistle be seriously read of all that you account to be the holy Brethren.

E I N I S.



